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| Immunisation after enrolment |
| Information for parents/carers of children enrolled in early childhood services in Victoria |
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From 1 November 2018, parents and carers of children attending early childhood education and care services in Victoria must provide the service with evidence that their child continues to be up to date with immunisations while attending the service[[1]](#footnote-2).

This is also the requirement that parents/carers provide evidence of their child’s up-to-date immunisation status to initially enrol in an early childhood service.

#### Who does this apply to?

This new requirement applies to parents/carers of children enrolled in long day care, kindergarten, occasional care and family day care (early childhood services).

Parents/carers are responsible for maintaining their child’s immunisation and ensuring the service has current evidence of immunisation.

Early childhood services are required to regularly request this evidence from parents/carers of children attending the service.

#### Why is this required?

The Victorian Government introduced this requirement to provide an important reminder to parents/carers about immunisation as part of a continued effort to maintain high childhood immunisation rates and protect the community from vaccine-preventable diseases.

While most children in Australia are fully vaccinated, these additional requests can assist parents/carers to remember and prioritise timely vaccination in the face of competing life pressures.

Accurate and up-to-date evidence of immunisation also helps services and health authorities quickly identify children at risk (for example, children too young to be fully immunised against a disease) and take whatever action is required to protect health if there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease at the service.

#### What is the early childhood service required to do?

Twice a year, usually at the same time as other update requests, the service will request parents/carers to provide evidence of up-to-date immunisation for their attending child. Services review the immunisation evidence provided to make sure it meets the requirements of the law and keep it with the child’s enrolment records. In addition, a health authority may review this record in the event of a disease outbreak at the service.

#### What are you required to do?

If your child has received a vaccine while they are attending an early childhood service, you are required to obtain an updated Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) and provide it to your child’s service.

If you receive a request from the service for the latest Immunisation History Statement, and you know you have already provided this to the service, **you do not need to provide another copy**.

#### What is an Immunisation History Statement?

It is a statement from the AIR that shows what vaccines your child has received and, if applicable, which vaccines are due in the future, and when. If a child cannot have a vaccine for medical reasons, this will be listed on the statement. All vaccines recorded on the AIR will appear in your child’s Immunisation History Statement. It is the job of the vaccine provider to tell the AIR when they give your child a vaccine and which vaccines they have given. The vaccines are provided free under the National Immunisation Program Schedule.

#### When do I provide a new Immunisation History Statement?

You can do this as soon as possible after your child receives a vaccination or respond to a request from the early childhood service.

#### How do I obtain an Immunisation History Statement?

The quickest way to get your child’s Immunisation History Statement is by using your Medicare online account through myGov or the Express Plus Medicare mobile app. Alternatively, you can visit your local Medicare service centre or request your child’s statement to be posted to you by calling the AIR enquiries line on 1800 653 809. It can take up to 14 days to get an Immunisation History Statement by post. Your GP or local council immunisation service can also print the Immunisation History Statement for you.

#### How do I tell if my child is ‘up to date’?

Review your child’s most recent AIR Immunisation History Statement. At the bottom of the statement, there is a section titled ‘Next due immunisation(s)’. If the next due vaccination date is in the future, then your child’s immunisations are up to date for their age. If your child has completed their childhood vaccinations, no vaccines will be listed under the ‘Next due immunisation(s)’ heading.

#### What if I need help?

Discuss your situation with your child’s service. Services can provide information regarding local support or immunisation services. If you have questions or concerns about immunisation, speak with your doctor.

#### Why immunise?

Immunisation is a proven and safe way to be protected against diseases that cause serious illness and sometimes death. Immunisations are free and protect the vaccinated person and those in the community who cannot be vaccinated by reducing diseases spreading.

#### When are immunisations due?

The National Immunisation Schedule program provides free vaccinations to children at birth, 2 months (from as early as six weeks), 4, 6, 12 and 18 months of age and 3½-4 years of age.

To find out what immunisations your child needs:

* see your doctor or contact your local council immunisation service
* search ‘childhood immunisation’ on the **Better Health Channel** <www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>.

#### More information

* **Better Health Channel** <www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>
* **Department of Health website** <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation>
* **Commonwealth Government Department of Health** <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation>
* For translated versions of this document, search ‘starting childcare or kindergarten’ on **Health Translations** <www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au>
  + Translating and interpreting service call 131 450

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| To receive this document in another format, email the **Immunisation Unit, Public Health Division, Department of Health** <immunisation@health.vic.gov.au>.  Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.  © State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Health, August 2021.  Available at: < https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play> |

1. *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, section 143E [↑](#footnote-ref-2)